

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7097

INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE

AMCONSUL GENOA

AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

AMCONSUL PALERMO

AMCONSUL TRIESTE

AMCONSUL TURIN

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TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBECT: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT PARTY DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY. APPARENTLY PACIFIED BY THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT (DC) SECRETARIAT'S NEW, HARDER ANTI-PCI LINE AS ARTICULATED IN DEPUTY SECRETARY GALLONI'S RECENT ATTACK ON PCI "IDEOLOGICAL AMBIGUITIES," THE SEPTEMBER 8-10 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE DC'S LEFT-WING FACTIONS STIRRED UP NONE OF THE INTRA-PARTY POLEMICS USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH FORZE NUOVE LEADER DONAT-CATTIN. ALTHOUGH IT RECEIVED LESS ATTENTION, A SEMINAR ON EUROCOMMUNISM HELD IN ROME ON SEPTEMBER 8 FOR AN INTER-FACTIONAL GATHERING OF SOME 50 FIRST AND SECOND-TERM DC PARLIAMENTARIANS MAY SIGNAL THE EMERGENCE OF AN INFORMAL DC PARLIAMENTARY INTEREST GROUPING BASED ON GENERATIONAL RATHER THAN FACTIONAL LINES. END SUMMARY

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1. ANNUAL MEETING OF DC LEFT FACTIONS STIRS LITTLE EXCITEMENT: FOR THE SECOND YEAR, THE STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST FORZE NUOVE FACTION LED BY DONAT-CATTIN INVITED LEADERS OF THE OTHER DC-LEFT FACTIONS (BASE AND MOROTEI) TO ITS ANNUAL CONVENTION AT THE VALLE D'AOSTA RESORT TOWN OF ST. VINCENT. THE SEPT. 8-10 AFFAIR ELICITED LITTLE INTEREST, HOWEVER, POSSIBLY BECAUSE DC DEPUTY SECRETARY

GALLONI'S RECENT HARD-HITTING ATTACK ON THE PCI FOR ITS "IDEOLOGICAL AMBIGUITIES" (ROME 14250) STOLE MOST OF CRUSTY VETERAN LEADER DONAT-CATTIN'S THUNDER. THE PARTICIPANTS FOUND THEMSELVES MUCH IN AGREEMENT WITH GALLONI'S HARDER ANTI-PCI LINE WHICH HAS ATTENUATED POLICY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FORZE NUOVE LEADERS AND THE PARTY SECRETARIAT. INTEREST IN THE MEETING ALSO WANED BECAUSE DC PRESIDENT MORO, WHO HAD INITIALLY BEEN BILLED TO DELIVER A MAJOR SPEECH ON FOREIGN POLICY, DID NOT ATTEND.

2. GALLONI RENEWS OVERTURE TO INTERMEDIATE PARTIES. IN HIS KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO THE ST. VINCENT MEETING, GALLONI REITERATED HIS RECENT CALL FOR A MORE COMBATIVE DC STRATEGY AIMED AT EXPOSING THE PCI'S "IDEOLOGICAL INCONSISTENCIES." SINCE DEMOCRACY DEPENDS ON THE EXISTENCE OF A POLITICAL OPPOSITION, GALLONI SAID THE DC COULD NEVER ACCEPT THE PCI'S THEORY OF AN "INEVITABLE SLIDE" TOWARD A POLITICAL AGREEMENT IN WHICH THE PCI WOULD JOIN THE GOVERNMENT IN A HISTORIC COMPROMISE WITH THE DC OR AS PART OF A BROAD, UNITY GOVERNMENT. HE SAID IT WAS THEREFORE IMPORTANT FOR THE DC "TO KEEP OPEN AN IMPORTANT SPACE FOR AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL POSITION OF THE SOCIALISTS AND THE LAY PARTIES" SO THAT THE PRESENT TRANSITIONAL POLITICAL PHASE MAY EVENTUALLY BE FOLLOWED BY A RETURN TO THE "DEMOCRATIC NORM" OF A DISTINCT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY AND MINORITY. DID GALLONI MEAN A NEW CENTER-LEFT COALITION? NO, GALLONI SAID, "NEW SOLUTIONS" HAD TO BE INVENTED. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MANY PSI AND LAY LEADERS MAY PRIVATELY REGARD THE DC'S RENEWED INVITATION AS REASSURING, PUBLIC REACTIONS TO GALLONI'S SPEECH WERE PREDICTABLY tepid. PSI SECRETARY CRAXI SAID THE SOCIALISTS DO NOT INTEND TO "REOPEN OLD CHAPTERS." THE PCI ALSO DISMISSED GALLONI'S OVERTURE AS "NOSTALGIA FOR OLD TIMES," AND POINTEDLY DEMANDED TO KNOW "WHAT OTHER FORMULA" GALLONI HAD IN MIND.

3. SOME PARTY FACTIONS ARE WEAKENING: THE DC-LEFT CONVENTION AT ST. VINCENT WAS PERHAPS MOST INTERESTING FOR THE EVIDENCE IT PROVIDED OF THE WEAKENING OF SOME MAJOR DC PARTY FACTIONS. WHILE DONAT-CATTIN CONTINUES TO RUN HIS FORZE NUOVE FACTION WITH A FIRM HAND, THE LEFT-WING BASE FACTION (TRADITIONALLY SPLIT BETWEEN NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN WINGS) IS LOSING COHESIVENESS. SOUTHERN BASE LEADER DE MITA (A MAJOR PROTAGONIST AT LAST YEAR'S MEETING) DIDN'T BOTHER TO ATTEND THIS YEAR. THE LARGE, MODERATE DOROTEI FACTION (ALSO SPLIT BETWEEN FOLLOWERS OF PICCOLI AND A SMALL GROUP AROUND BISAGLIA)

HAS ALSO BECOME INCREASINGLY AMORPHOUS IN RECENT MONTHS.

4. GENERATIONAL AFFINITY PROVIDES NEW TIES:

FACTIONAL AFFILIATION IS STILL VIRTUALLY ESSENTIAL FOR ADVANCEMENT AND SURVIVAL IN DC POLITICS, BUT GENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY AMONG FIRST AND SECOND-TERM PARLIAMENTARIANS IS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT FACTOR IN INTERNAL DC GROUPINGS. ALTHOUGH EXTREMELY CAREFUL TO AVOID THE IMPRESSION OF FORMING A NEW FACTION, SOME 50 NEW-GENERATION DC PARLIAMENTARIANS MET IN ROME AT THE NAZARENO SCHOOL ON SEPT. 8 FOR A SEMINAR ON EUROCOMMUNISM. WHILE THE DISCUSSION (LED BY GENOA DEPUTY BRUNO ORSINI) WAS UNEVENTFUL AND PREDICTABLE IN ITS CONCLUSIONS (EURO-COMMUNISM IS THE PCI SAYING THAT YOU AND I MUST WORK TOGETHER

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TO ACHIEVE MY OBJECTIVES"), THE IMPORTANT FACT WAS THAT THE MEETING TOOK PLACE ON AN INTER-FACTIONAL BASIS.

5. PROTESTS TO THE CONTRARY, A NEW PARLIAMENTARY INTEREST GROUP MAY BE EMERGING. INVITATIONS TO THE NAZARENO MEETING WERE SIGNED BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF VIRTUALLY EVERY FACTION AND GROUPING IN ORDER TO STRESS ITS NON-FACTIONAL CHARACTER. THESE INCLUDED DEPUTY DC CHAMBER LEADER GERARDO BIANCO (UNDER WHOSE LEADERSHIP A SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL VOTING BLOCK APPEARS TO BE FORMING). OTHERS WERE EDUCATION MINISTER MALFATTI (FANFANIANO); MARTINAZZOLI (BASE); SARTI (INDEP.); BORRUSO (COMUNIONE E LIBERAZIONE); ANDREATTA (MOROTEAO); MAZZOTTA (INDEP.); ZACCAGNINI'S ASSISTANT, PISANU, ATTENDED FOR THE SECRETARIAT. ALTHOUGH HE SENT A WRITTEN CONTRIBUTION, UMBERTO AGNELLI DID NOT ATTEND TO AVOID, WE ARE TOLD, HAVING THE SEMINAR BRANDED AS ANOTHER "FIAT-SPONSORED" HILTONITE GATERING. COMMENT: SMARTING UNDER THE OFTEN PRE-EMPTORY AUTHORITY OF THE PARTY'S TRADITIONAL LEADERS, THE NEW PARLIAMENTARIANS HAVE PRESSED (ALBEIT WITH ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS) FOR A LARGER, ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE IN THE LEADERSHIP AND OPERATIONS OF THE PARTY. WHILE IT IS TOO EARLY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE ROME NAZZARINO MEETING SIGNALS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW PARLIAMENTARY INTEREST GROUPING OR VOTING BLOCK, IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS (SARTI AND MARTINAZZOLI OPENLY SPOKE OF THE NEED TO FORM "A NEW AND DIFFERENT GROUP". BIANCO HIMSELF DESCRIBED IT AS A "GROUP OF OPINIONS, NOT A CLAN." INTERESTED DEPARTMENT OFFICERS MAY WISH TO EXPLORE THE SUBJECT FURTHER WITH THREE YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING AND WHO ARE CURRENTLY VISITING WASHINGTON (SEGNI, USELLINI, AND CIRINO-POMICINO).GARDNER

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